



VETERANS REUNION

Will Take Place at New Orleans May 19-22.

AN EDITOR'S ADDRESS

Urges Old Soldiers to Attend—Some Facts about the Monitor—Virginia Fight—Anecdotes of the War.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

New Orleans, Feb. 13, 1903.

The accompanying letter, written by

Mr. Page M. Baker, editor of the New

Orleans Times-Democrat, and one of the

most conspicuous and forceful figures in

Southern journalism, in the interest of

the coming reunion of the old Confederate

Veterans, which is to take place in New

Orleans, May 19, 20, 21 and 22, is respect-

fully submitted with the expressed hope

that you may be able to give some a

prominent position in your columns. The

cause of the rapidly thinning "gray line"

is one that appeals to the people of this

country irrespective of party or of creed,

and it is because of this, and the fact

that the reunions of the veterans will,

in a few years become a thing of the

past, that we ask your aid in your

hands. New Orleans wants to accord

the old Confederates a warm and hearty

reception and to assure them all that the

doors of this city and the hearts of its

people will be wide open on the memor-

able occasion referred to herein.

Very respectfully,

COL. J. A. HARRIS, U. C. V.,

Aide de Camp;

GEN. J. B. GORDON'S Staff,

Chairman Press Committee.

THE CONFEDERATE REUNION.

Indications are plentiful that the reu-

nion to be held in New Orleans, May

19, 20, 21 and 22, of the United Confed-

erate Veterans will be the most worthily

memorable event in the history of the

organization.

Ample preparations are making to re-

ceive the hosts of Confederates that

will soon converge upon New Orleans

from every section of the Union. The

people of this city hope and expect that

the grim men in gray who forty years

ago imperiled all for their country—and

regretted not that they imperiled it—

will be met in the most cordial and

friendly manner. The date set for the

reunion draws near. We want the vener-

able and venerable men in gray who

line that is growing thinner every year

to move with martial tread once more

through the streets of the metropolis of

the South. From Louisiana and her

neighboring States of Mississippi, Ala-

bama, Texas and Arkansas, from far-

away Tennessee and Florida; from

farther away Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia

Kentucky and Maryland, and from the

more distant Northern and Eastern States

in which Southern soldiers have won

congenial homes and won enduring

reputation—from every point in the

Union, we desire that ex-Confederates

and the sons and daughters of ex-Confed-

erates shall come to New Orleans.

THE THINNING LINE.

In the impressive procession will be

men who represent the splendid soldiers

of the South who at the call of

of duty—and is ready still to fight val-

antly and to die without a murmur. Men

who fought not for fame, but for empire,

not (thank God) for money, but for

friends and homes, for homes and coun-

try. In reflecting upon what the Con-

federate soldier was, as well as upon

what he did, the people of New Orleans

have highly resolved that the reunion of

this year shall be the most interesting,

the most impressive and the most suc-

cessful of all that have been held by

the heroes in gray.

The organization of United Confederate

Veterans, has, it is true, reached, if it

has not passed, its zenith. Its main

glorious—the force and the fire that once

inherited to it—has waned with the quick-

ness of years. Against it the fierce gales

of necessity, and the fiercer gales of

time itself, have blown pitilessly. Num-

bers, and the power is necessarily fast

diminishing; morally, its energy for good

is strengthening every hour. The memo-

ries awakened by it and the pride stirred

by a sight of the Confederate Veterans

as they pass in annual review on the

occasion of these reunions are forever

consecrated and hallowed in the hearts

of the Southern people.

THE PICTURE.

We need not recount all the names on

the sacred list, nor tell the sad, brave

story over in all its desolate grandeur

of ideal and starving suffering; but the

picture, sketched or finished, is now, and

will always be, mirrored in the eyes of

every beholder. If it is only for a mo-

ment the people of the South will, on

these occasions of Confederate reunion,

lift the noble pathetic picture and rever-

sely uncover before it; for, spite the

afflicting influence of time, it may never

be forgotten that what William of Or-

ange's followers were to Holland, what

the men who fought with Bruce and

Wallace were to Scotland, what Mar-

ton's "ten thousand" were to Greece,

what, indeed, Thermopylae's "three hun-

dre" were to Sparta, the Confederate

soldiers were, and are, to the South—

to Americans at the Southern States.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

It is to the Confederate soldier—to his

example in courage, in fortitude, in pa-

tience and in the capacity to suffer and

to be still—that the younger generation

of the South owes whatever is worthy in

its civilization. This debt may never

be paid, certainly not, within the life-

time of the Confederate soldier; but the

heroic sacrifice that inspired him can

live again in our remembrance.

and in the remembrance of our children.

The reunion to be held in May will re-

mind us of the high civic responsibility

that is ours and will prompt us to a wider

and a wiser patriotism. It will teach

us that the lamp of idealism should be

kept forever glowing, and it will help the

world to understand that the spirit of the

Confederate soldier is the breath of

the Holy Spirit, died not with the

prophet, but survived him.

PAGE M. BAKER,

Editor New Orleans Times-Democrat.

"Sinking The Merrimac."

Many are the misrepresentations which

have appeared in Northern books, papers

and magazines about the battle between

the Monitor and the Virginia, or "Mer-

rimac," as she is generally known. Some

of these have been inspired by hate, and

some by ignorance, while "sensation

money" to those aboard the Monitor has

undoubtedly had much to do with it. The

greater the "feels" performance on the

vessel, the greater the pension money, es-

pecially to one whose eyes were damaged

while in the turret during the fight. This

latter claim of damage done by and to the

widely known officer in question is a

matter of record.

One of the greatest misstatements about

this matter has recently appeared

was in an Associated Press dispatch from

New York which appeared in a great

many papers yesterday morning. The Ad-

vertiser included.

The statement in question is found in

the notice of the death of a certain

Claude De Lorraine, of whom it is said

he "was chief engineer of the Monitor

when that vessel sank the Merrimac dur-

ing the Civil War." So at last the teach-

ings of Northern histories, especially

school histories, have borne fruit—the

"Monitor sank the Merrimac!" Mirabile

dictu, wouldn't there have been "great

odors" of prize money for those aboard

the Monitor if it had only been known

that the "Monitor" sank the Mer-

rimac? Oh, but wouldn't there though?

It is pitiable to think of those poor fel-

lows on the Monitor going to their graves

with nothing but pension money, whereas

they might have been followed full of

prize money as well, for "sinking" that

terrible Merrimac (Virginia).

To read accounts emanating from a

certain section, one might fancy that the

Virginia (usually known as the Mer-

rimac) was destroyed, or just about de-

stroyed, by the Monitor, but was such

the case? It was after the sinking of

the Cumberland by the Virginia and the

destruction of the Congress, which, after

running up two white flags to half-mast

and a token surrender, after receiving

the terrible fire of the Virginia, fled

upon boats sent to her, and scattering

consternation on all sides among the Fe-

derals, that the battle between her and

the Monitor took place, and that the

Monitor, when she had such excellent

but it was undecided by the boys of the

South that it was the Monitor which first

withdrew, in the ending of that battle,

getting into shallow water, where the

Virginia could not follow, and that the

Virginia did not retire until after the

Monitor had done so, and then slowly,

after falling to coax the Monitor again

to combat. There was some damage

done to the guns of the Virginia, but the

records show that this was done during

an undecided combat with the vessels of

the Federal fleet, and not with the Mon-

itor. It was a wooden vessel of the Fe-

deral fleet which did that damage and not

the iron-clad.

Another fact which one is not apt to

find in Northern histories is that after

this combat the Virginia stood forth for

several days, challenging the Monitor to

another trial for strength—which the lat-

ter did not accept, and never did accept.

She seemed to find the game of Postress

Monroe, under which she took refuge,

much more pleasant companions than

those on the Virginia, so she stayed out

there. If the Virginia was so badly in-

jured, why did not the Monitor follow

up the track which she imperiled the

virtuities? Those in command found

that it was much easier to "claim" than

to demonstrate.

The Virginia at a later date (upon the

evacuation of Norfolk) was blown up, but

it was done by Confederate hands, and

not by the Monitor, becoming a trophy of

war. No alien hand took part in her de-

struction. Anyone desiring fuller infor-

mation upon these matters will find the

document in "The Confederate States

Navy," by J. R. Schurz, and also in the

and the blowing up of the Confederate

vessels, in Admiral Semmes' thrilling

book, "Memoirs of Service Afloat."

There have really been three "sinkings

of the Merrimac." The first was the

sinking of the war vessel of that name

by the Federals to keep her from falling

into the hands of the Confederates. These

latter gentlemen, who, by the way, were

very enterprising and industrious, and

have advanced revolutionized modern naval

warfare in giving ironclads, torpedoes in

their present efficiency and submarine

boats to the world, did raise the Merri-

mac, remodeled her and gave her the

name Virginia, though the old name is

best known. The second "sinking of the

Merrimac" was done by them. The</